

Appl. No. 10/006,231
Amendment dated: December 30, 2003
Reply to OA of: October 24, 2003

REMARKS

Applicant acknowledges with appreciation the indication that claims 15-19, 21 and 23 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicant has made every effort to place the application in early condition for allowance by restricting the claims to the allowable subject matter. This amendment does not introduce new issues to be considered but simply restricts the application to the allowable subject matter and entry is in order.

Applicant has amended allowable claim 15 by incorporating it into claim 14, the independent claim from which it depended thereby placing claim 14 in immediate condition for allowance. Claim 15 has been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer as redundant. Claim 17 has been amended as suggested by the Examiner and the Examiner's helpful suggestion is appreciated. All other claims are dependent either directly or indirectly on claim 14 thereby placing all the claims now present in the application in condition for immediate allowance.

The objection of claim 17 because of informalities is most respectfully traversed in view of the amendment to the claim. Applicant has amended claim 17 as suggested by the Examiner and therefore this objection has been obviated. Accordingly, it is most respectfully requested that this objection be withdrawn.

The rejection of claims 14, 20 and 24 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Cassar in view of Kazuo has been carefully considered but is most respectfully traversed in view of the amendments to the claims placing claim 14 in condition for allowance. Claims 20 and 24 are now dependent on an allowable claim and therefore are equally allowable. In view of the amendment to the claims, it is believed this rejection has been obviated and therefore it is most respectfully requested that this rejection be withdrawn.

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The rejection of claim 22 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Cassar in view of JP '449 as applied to claim 14 above, and further in view of Tsaur has been carefully considered but in view of the amendment to the claims, this claim is now allowable and this rejection has been obviated. Accordingly, it is most respectfully requested that this rejection be withdrawn.

In view of the above comments and further amendments to the specification and claims, favorable reconsideration and allowance of all of the claims now present in the application are most respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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